SUMMER 2016

PERSPECTIVES

A publication for members of the Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors

HIGH IMPACT PRACTICES

WHY WE SHOULD INCORPORATE THESE ELEMENTS INTO PRACTICE AND THE IMPACT IT COULD MAKE

AFA Foundation

Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors Foundation

The Road to Boston Campaign

40TH

HAVE YOU JOINED US?

to learn more visit:

afagives.org

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Some professionals have the tendency to go with what is popular and trendy in higher education when working with students and advancing our work. Others operate based on data they personally have collected or on national research that has been published. It is also common for professionals to remain considerate of the dynamics of their campus, community, and/or organization and base their practices and behaviors on those inclinations. None of these methods are wrong per say. However, it is helpful to keep in mind the need for our efforts to be rooted in what is considered best practices in higher education.

In this edition, one of our members Dr. Josh Schutts summarizes an article written by George Kuh and the American Association of Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) on the topic of High Impact Practices and how the Essential Learning Outcomes (ELOs) developed by AAC&U fit within those principles. As we continue to be mindful of our work and the outcomes of our efforts, it would be wise for us to pull out both the original article and Dr. Schutt's overview as a guide to implement initiatives practically and examine our thoughts behind them philosophically.

When it comes to our work in the field of higher education, we should be done with the ways of shooting in the dark, hoping that our efforts are in alignment with best practices. Instead, we should be aiming for better competency as professionals. We have the resources to know better and do better. Several are included in this edition. At first glance you may think, "How do these practices relate to my work?" The answer is quite simple. We have a responsibility to aid in the development of fraternity and sorority members not only as it involves their affiliation but holistically as students of higher learning. We hope that you enjoy the read and as always answer the call to do good work.

Sincerely,

Veronica Moore

Veronica Moore

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Last December at the Annual Meeting, Annie had the pleasure of sitting through a session presented by Dr. Josh Schutts and Jason Bergeron. The session focused on High Impact Practices as first defined by George Kuh and now overseen by the Association of American Colleges and Universities' (AAC&U). Josh and Jason probably didn't expect to only make it halfway through the presentation, but the information and conversation were so rich, speeding it up would have been a disservice. The thesis was institutions of higher learning are finding ways to incorporate more and more high impact practices into the learning environment. So where does fraternity and sorority fit into this?

If fraternities and sororities are the experiential learning areas that we abundantly tout, then how can they assist colleges and universities in developing these High Impact Practices? This is an important question in an age where the existence of fraternal organizations is being questioned more than ever before and campuses are being targetted to create meaningful, engaging, deep, and worthwhile learning experiences for students as consumers.

Within this issue, we highlight a program or experience currently in existence that partially aligns with a High Impact Practice. These are programs or experiences that are already successful in some way, and with a few modifications, could become High Impact Practices, if desired. The intent of this issue is not to say we can or even should alter all fraternity/sorority programs and experiences into High Impact Practices. That is not practical. The intent is to consider how we could incorporate more of the components of High Impact Practices into our work.

Sincerely,

Annie Carlson Welch

Emilee Danielson-Burke

FRATERNITY AND SORORITY EXPERIENCE SURVEY

The Fraternity & Sorority Experience Survey (FSES) provides insight on new members, membership intake, chapter processes, advising, personal growth and development, academic experiences, and overall satisfaction with the fraternity/sorority experience.

Bring this important assessment tool to your institution or inter/national organization by contacting Ari Stillman, Project Director, at (970) 797-4361 or astillman@SynergosAMC.com

JACKLYN FRIEDMAN

YES MEANS YES

Jaclyn Friedman has popularized the "YES means Yes" standard of sexual consent and has helped redefine the concept of healthy sexuality on campuses nationwide.

Straight-talking and funny, Jaclyn leads with facts and empathy, not scare tactics. Her lecture appeals to students as leaders, not suspects.

AVAILABLE FOR KEYNOTE SPEECHES, ORIENTATION, AND TRAINING SEMINARS.

keppler SPEAKERS

703.516.400
www.kepplerspeakers.com

ON SOCIAL MEDIA

On Twitter from Kelly Jo Karnes

Great article about Trans Inclusion in #AFAPerspectives. Happy @kschendel reps the work that @trisigma has done in this area! @jesspettitt

On Facebook fom Matt Deeg

Dan Wrona hitting it out of the park again with his latest Perspectives article: "The changing environment of student affairs and higher education calls campus fraternity/sorority professionals to rebalance their focus in favor of macro-level strategic thinking. It means investing in initiatives changing the environment for all students rather than change-the-person or trickle-down-advising strategies only reaching a few students for a short time. It requires incorporating organization theory, environmental management, and systems change into professional development efforts in place of topics like counseling, education, and student development." - Wrona, Perspectives, Spring 2016

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Voice your feedback – anything that's on your mind – whether good or bad, compliments or criticisms, we want to hear it.

TWEET USING #AFAPERSPECTIVES

POST YOUR COMMENTS ON ASSOCIATION OF FRATERNITY/SORORITY ADVISORS

SHOW US HOW YOU READ *PERSPECTIVES* USING #AFAPERSPECTIVES

EMAIL *PERSPECTIVES* EDITORS AT AWCARLSO@NCSU.EDU OR EMILEEDANIELSON@GMAIL.COM

Girls around the world are unable to reach their full potential because they don't have access to schools.

circle of sisterhood®

This summer the Circle of Sisterhood is funding **6 schools** that will be built in Haiti, Malawi, and Nicaragua.

56 sorority women and advisors will travel to Nicaragua and Malawi, working with community members to build safe spaces for children to learn.

Because of your support we are providing educational opportunities in communities that desperately need schools. Since **2010** we have supported **5 school builds** with funding and volunteers. This summer we will more than DOUBLE that number. See photos from our Treks at **www.facebook.com/CircleofSisterhoodFoundation**

Could your community help to eradicate poverty through education? Contact info@circleofsisterhood.org for information on getting involved.

ASSOCIATION OF FRATERNITY | SORORITY ADVISORS

Perspectives is the official publication of the Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors, Inc. (AFA). Views expressed are those of the individual authors/contributors/advertisers and are not necessarily those of the Association. AFA encourages the submission of articles, essays, ideas and advertisements. Submissions should be directed to the Editors, advertising queries to the staff.

Submission Deadlines:
Issue 4: September 1, 2016

Editors
Annie Carlson Welch
NC State University
awcarlso@ncsu.edu
(919) 515-5598

Emilee Danielson-Burke
Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania
emileedanielson@gmail.com
(717) 477-1848

AFA Staff:
Andrea Starks-Corbin
Marketing & Communications Manager
Andrea@afa1976.org

Designed by:
Kelsey Turner
Alpha Sigma Alpha Sorority
kturner@AlphaSigmaAlpha.org

2016 Editorial Board:
Noah Borton, Delta Upsilon Fraternity
Julie Bryant, George Mason University
Carter Gilbert, Lehigh University
G. Andrew Hohn, University of Illinois
Zachary Knight, Christian Brothers University
Gabrielle Rimmaudo, Chi Psi
Kathryn Schneider, The University of Akron
Hannah Seoh, Delta Phi Lambda Foundation
Natalie Shaak, Drexel University
Kate Steiner, Armstrong University
Nathan Thomas, Bradley University
Kate Wehby, Alpha Sigma Tau Sorority

Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors
P.O. Box 1369, Suite 250
Fort Collins, CO 80522-1369
info@afa1976.org
phone: (970) 797.4361
fax: (888) 855.8670
www.afa1976.org
@AFA1976

AFA is a proud member of:

FRATERNITY COMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATION

IN THIS ISSUE

HIGH IMPACT PRACTICES 101

JOSHUA W. SCHUTTS, PH.D.

The essence of high-impact practice is not a new thing. Many of the components were first proposed by Chickering and Gamson (1987) as best and promising practices for undergraduate teaching and learning. The authors identified seven principles which included faculty interaction, student cooperation, active learning, prompt feedback, time on task, high expectations, and respect for diverse talents and learning styles. Later studies demonstrated the positive effects of those practices on student learning and development (Chickering & Reisser, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). **Page 10**

HIGHLIGHTS

16:: FIRST YEAR SEMINARS
18:: COMMON INTELLECTUAL EXPERIENCES
20:: LEARNING COMMUNITIES
22:: WRITING INTENSIVE COURSES
24:: COLLABORATIVE ASSIGNMENTS & PROJECTS
26:: UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH
28:: DIVERSITY AND GLOBAL EXPERIENCES
30:: SERVICE LEARNING
32:: INTERNSHIPS
34:: CAPSTONE COURSES & PROJECTS

COLUMNS

03 :: FROM THE PRESIDENT
04 :: LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

GLOBAL service trip

Connecting though service, global citizenship & social justice.

December 10-16 | Negril, Jamaica

Montego Bay Sangster International Airport

Cost: $1,050 + airfare

For more information visit:

www.afa1976.org

Registration Deadline: Friday, November 18

A partnership between the Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors and Delta Upsilon International Fraternity

CONTRIBUTORS

AMBER GARRISON DUNCAN

Amber Garrison Duncan works at Lumina Foundation where her strategy work focuses on creating new systems of quality credentials in higher education. This allows her to draw upon her 15 years of experience working on college campuses in student affairs designing co-curricular learning experiences and leading assessment. Amber has researched and written on general education, assessment, Latinas in higher education and women in leadership.

JASON BERGERON

Jason Bergeron serves as the Director of the Center for Fraternity & Sorority Life at the University of Houston and has approximately 10 years professional experience in fraternity/sorority advising. Jason has held multiple leadership positions within AFA and is a current, sitting member of the AFA Board of Directors. His research interests include empirical measures of student learning, high impact practices, and institutional effectiveness.

MATT DEEG

Matt Deeg is a doctoral student at the University of Kansas, where he is studying organizational development and human resource management. He worked for the past seven years in fraternity/sorority life and continues to challenge the field to be better and build better people and organizations. When not reading or writing, he enjoys inspiring his cats to exercise with a laser and cooking delicious food.

NOAH BORTON

Noah Borton is the Senior Director of Educational Programs for Delta Upsilon Fraternity. He has worked for the last 15 years in Fraternity/Sorority Life, Leadership Programs, Student Organizations, Admissions, Orientation, Educational Programs, and Chapter Services for multiple campuses and fraternity headquarters. He is a member of Sigma Nu Fraternity.

JOSHUA SCHUTTS, PH.D.

Joshua Schutts, Ph.D. works at the University of West Florida as the Assistant to the Dean of University College for the Quality Enhancement Plan. The program he supervises, Communication for Professional Success, is an initiative that requires faculty and staff projects to be high-impact practices focused on improving students' professional communication skills. Josh is also an avid researcher in the field of fraternal societies. He has co-authored articles exploring organizational commitment, moral development, brotherhood and sisterhood in college fraternal organizations.

HIGH IMPACT PRACTICES

By Joshua W. Schutts, Ph.D.

"STUDENTS WHO PARTICIPATED IN HIGH-IMPACT PRACTICES REPORTED GAINS IN DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES, DISCUSSING IDEAS WITH FACULTY AND PEERS OUTSIDE OF CLASS, ANALYZING AND SYNTHESIZING IDEAS, APPLYING THEORY, EVALUATING THE VALUE OF INFORMATION, CRITICALLY EXAMINING ONE'S OWN VIEWS, AND TRYING TO UNDERSTAND OTHERS' PERSPECTIVES (KUH, 2008)."

The essence of high-impact practice is not a new thing. Many of the components were first proposed by Chickering and Gamson (1987) as best and promising practices for undergraduate teaching and learning. The authors identified seven principles which included faculty interaction, student cooperation, active learning, prompt feedback, time on task, high expectations, and respect for diverse talents and learning styles. Later studies demonstrated the positive effects of those practices on student learning and development (Chickering & Reisser, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005).

"IT IS POSSIBLE THAT A QUALITY HIGH-IMPACT PRACTICE—ONE THAT IMPROVES STUDENT LEARNING AND TRANSFORMS A STUDENT'S EXPERIENCE—MAY NOT POSSESS EVERY ELEMENT OF QUALITY. HOWEVER, THE HIGHEST QUALITY EXPERIENCES WILL POSSESS A STRONG MAJORITY OF THEM."

STUDENT LEARNING

Although the elements of high-impact practice have existed for some time, it has been of relatively recent design to coin them "high-impact practices." In 2002, The Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) called for colleges and universities to embrace four Essential Learning Outcomes (ELOs) for student success. In their view, these outcomes are positioned to help students meet ever-changing demands of the 21st century. The ELOs are:

- Knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world through engagement with "big questions," both contemporary and enduring.
- Intellectual and Practical Skills, including inquiry, critical and creative thinking, written and oral communication, information literacy, quantitative literacy, teamwork, the integration of learning, and problem solving through a pedagogy that gets progressively more challenging.
- Individual and social responsibility, including civic knowledge and engagement, intercultural knowledge and competence, ethical reasoning and action, and foundations and skills for lifelong learning anchored in active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges.
- Integrative and applied learning, including the synthesis of understanding across general and specialized studies as demonstrated through the application of knowledge and skills to new settings and complex problems.

In 2007, the AAC&U identified a number of innovative educational practices—which they termed "high-impact practices." One year later, Kuh (2008) described the benefits of student participation in these practices using results from the well-known National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE, 2007). Many of the reported gains in learning and development mapped directly to the AAC&U's Essential Learning Outcomes. Students who participated in high-impact practices reported gains in diverse perspectives, discussing ideas with faculty and peers outside of class, analyzing and synthesizing ideas, applying theory, evaluating the value of information, critically examining one's own views, and trying to understand others' perspectives (Kuh, 2008). Given their value to student learning and development, Kuh contended that every student should participate in at least two high-impact practices during their college career—one in their first year, and one inside their major.

ADDITIONAL STUDIES

Several researchers have recently explored the value of high-impact practices. Brownell and Swaner (2009) explored undergraduate research, learning communities, first year seminars, and service-learning. The authors concluded that the impact of these practices "could potentially be greater when colleges and faculty take the time to design these experiences carefully, paying attention to each piece of planning and implementation" (p. 26). Findings have generally suggested that students who participated in those high-impact practices had higher persistence rates, college GPAs, and rates of peer interaction. Students' also reported gains in critical thinking skills, appreciation for diversity, belonging, knowledge about campus resources, moral reasoning, social justice orientation, moral reasoning, socially-responsible leadership, a sense of civic responsibility, and overall engagement and satisfaction (Brownell & Swaner, 2009; Kilgo, Sheets, & Pascarella, 2015).

As beneficial as high-impact practices are, issues with access and opportunity exist. Kuh and O'Donnell (2013), drawing on several years of NSSE data, reported that proportionally fewer first-generation students, transfer students, Black, and Hispanic students participated in high-impact practices. This points to a deeper conversation about quality, access, equity, and scaling. Perhaps we need to ask ourselves:

1. How would we know, and to what extent can we demonstrate, if a program or experience is truly a high-impact practice?
2. How equitable is the participation in high-impact practices among our various student sub-populations and underrepresented groups, and what barriers might exist that hinder these students from participating in these high-impact practices?
3. How might we scale quality high-impact practices so that more students, or different groups of students, may experience them?
4. What makes a Quality High-Impact Practice?

TYPES OF HIGH-IMPACT PRACTICES

FIRST-YEAR SEMINARS AND EXPERIENCES

First-year students are introduced to "big questions" or new ideas through a small group setting that emphasizes critical inquiry, writing, speaking, information literacy, collaborative learning, and practical skills.

COMMON INTELLECTUAL EXPERIENCES

Students are exposed to a "core" curriculum that is sequenced and covers broad themes or topics.

LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Students are challenged to integrate learning across courses to address "big questions" beyond the classroom. Most experiences explore a common topic and/or common readings, and link group work with faculty interaction. In some cases, students also live together within their learning environment.

WRITING-INTENSIVE COURSES OR EXPERIENCES

Students are encouraged to produce and revise various forms of writing for different audiences and different purposes through repeated practice. This could also apply to ethical inquiry and oral communication.

COLLABORATIVE ASSIGNMENTS & PROJECTS

Students learn to work and solve problems in the company of others, and sharpen their understanding by listening seriously to others—especially with individuals who are unlike them.

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

Students are involved in asking "big questions" and encouraged to make empirical observation, utilize cutting edge technology, and foster sense of excitement that comes from working to answer important questions.

DIVERSITY AND GLOBAL LEARNING

Students are exposed to the cultures, experiences, and perspectives of individuals who are different from them. Typically, this exposure involves reconciling difficult differences—such as racial, ethnic, gender inequality, or continuing struggles for human rights, freedom, and power. These are frequently augmented by community-based learning or study abroad.

SERVICE AND COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING

Students receive direct experience with an issue they are studying in the curriculum, and with ongoing community efforts to analyze and solve problems. Fundamental to this approach is the application of knowledge in real-world settings and the reflection—a key divergence from volunteerism or philanthropy. Such programs model the value of giving back to the community and working with local partners in preparation for citizenship, work, and life.

INTERNSHIPS

Students receive direct experience in a work setting, usually related to their career interests. They are supervised, coached, and mentored by professionals in their field.

CAPSTONE OR CULMINATING COURSES AND EXPERIENCES

Students integrate and apply their learning from a prolonged series of educational experiences. Traditionally, this involves the creation of a portfolio, paper, report, or project.

KUH & O'DONNELL'S (2013) EIGHT ELEMENTS OF HIGH IMPACT PRACTICE

1. Performance expectations are set at appropriately high levels
Students are challenged to achieve beyond their current ability, and what they believe they are capable of, through projects, assignments, and activities.

2. Significant investment of time and effort by students over an extended period of time
Students participate in projects or assignments that span the course of an entire semester, may have multiple parts that build on each other, and eventually culminate in some deliverable, such as a paper or presentation.

3. Interactions with faculty and peers about substantive matters
Students are frequently challenged (e.g., weekly basis) to participate in a combination of large group, small group, or individual learning exercises.

4. Experiences with diversity or difference
Students are exposed to, must contend with, reflect upon, and discuss the people and real-world circumstances that differ from those with which the student is familiar.

5. Frequent, timely, and constructive feedback
Students meet with, and receive feedback from, peers and the instructor at various points to discuss progress, next steps, and problems encountered and to review the quality of the student's contribution to the project.

6. Periodic, structured opportunities to reflect and integrate learning
Students are presented with linked courses or activities wherein one project or activity necessitates that students draw on material or discussions had during a previous activity or experience.

7. Opportunities to discover relevance of learning through real-world applications
Students are required to apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired, while also engaging in discussions with peers, supervisors, and instructors as well as reflection on the connection between classroom learning, one's lived experiences, and the work setting.

8. Public demonstration of competence
Students are evaluated by an instructor, supervisor, or other accomplished practitioner capable of discerning if the student has demonstrated skill attainment or knowledge acquisition.

The foundation for quality high-impact practice lies in pedagogy and design. It is possible that a quality high-impact practice—one that improves student learning and transforms a student's experience—may not possess every element of quality. However, the highest quality experiences will possess a strong majority of them. Kuh and O'Donnell (2013) identified eight elements of high-impact practice, which are presented in the table below.

When it comes to demonstrating quality, direct and indirect assessment of student learning is appropriate. These findings can, and should, be supplemented with student beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions. Our ability to map the programs outcomes and activities to the elements of high-impact practice is critical to demonstrate our intentionality. We must implement backward design—i.e., we must "begin with the end in mind." This process involves asking ourselves an additional set of questions: (1) What are the outcomes we hope to achieve? (2) what activities should the students participate in that may lead to these outcomes? (3) How are those activities congruent with the elements of high-impact practice? (4) How must we design the program or experience so that we can deliver on those elements vis-à-vis the identified activities?

ACCESS AND EQUITY

As mentioned earlier, certain groups of students have proportionately less access and experience with many types of high-impact practice. Kuh and O'Donnell (2013) reaffirmed the need for dialogue with students about the benefits of high-impact experiences. Some students may never have entertained the possibility of their participation in one of these transformational activities. The authors stated that "some institutions have made high-impact practices impossible to avoid by sewing them into the curriculum (p. 11)." We therefore must ask ourselves:

- To what extent have we done this within the fraternal experience?
- Can we say that every student has the possibility to transform themselves?
- What might we point to in order to demonstrate how and when every member will experience activities or courses that are grounded in the essential elements of high-impact practice as a part of their membership in a fraternity or sorority?
- What kind of data have we collected and evaluated to document student growth, and the program modifications made in the name of continuous improvement?

Part of understanding access and equity is capturing underserved students' engagement in high-impact practices. Finley and McNair (2013) presented quantitative data from the 2006 and 2008 NSSE administrations (n=25,336) on participation rates and gains in learning, competence, and social development among

"ALSO IDENTIFIED WERE BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION AMONG UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS, SUCH AS THE LACK OF ADVISING OR GUIDANCE ABOUT WHAT HIGH-IMPACT PRACTICES ARE OR WHY THEY MATTER, AND AN INABILITY TO DEVOTE THE NECESSARY TIME TO SUCH ACTIVITIES BECAUSE OF COMPETING PRIORITIES IN THEIR ALREADY BUSY LIVES."

students of different racial backgrounds, first-generation college students, and transfer students. Results indicated more frequent participation by transfer students, and less frequent participation by Black and Hispanic students. The authors reiterated that all students benefit from engagement in multiple high-impact practices, especially those from underserved populations.

Quantitative findings were supplemented with focus group research that triangulated skills that students identified as being important to their future with the AAC&U's Essential Learning Outcomes and competencies that employers reported as valuable. Also identified were barriers to participation among underserved populations, such as the lack of advising or guidance about what high-impact practices are or why they matter, and an inability to devote the necessary time to such activities because of competing priorities in their already busy lives.

SCALING-HIGH IMPACT PRACTICES

Bringing high-impact practices to scale is about shining a light on their occurrence and committing the necessary resources to ensure their quality execution. Scaling also refers to the modifications to existing experiences that are grounded in data and ensure the experience legitimately functions as a high-impact practice (Kuh & O'Donnell, 2013). At its core, the concept of scaling high-impact practices helps us answer the question our students often pose: "Why am I doing this?" Scaling also addresses concerns about access and equity by targeting the expansion of high-impact practices to students who need them the most.

Central to the conversation about scaling is the consideration of policy in a way that instantiates the expectations and opportunities for participation within the community. In this regard, high-impact practices become valued at the system (community) level. When this occurs, it's not just something that the "Alpha Beta's" do; it becomes something that we—as a collective—do. Something we all place great value in. Ergo, student participation in these quality experiences becomes a shared expectation—a high standard that the community sets for itself and expects from all of its members and organizations.

REFERENCES

Association of American Colleges and Universities. (2002). *Greater expectations: A new vision for learning as a nation goes to college.* Washington, DC: AAC&U

AAC&U(2007). *College Learning for the New Global Century.* Washington, DC: AAC&U

Brownell, J. E., & Swaner, L. E. (2009). High-impact practices: Applying the learning outcomes literature to the development of successful campus programs. *Peer Review,* 11(2), 28-30. Association of American Colleges and Universities

Chickering, A. W., & Gamson, Z. F. (1987). S*even principles for good practice in undergraduate education. AAHE Bulletin, 39*(7), 3–7.

Chickering, A. W., & Reisser, L. (1993). *Education and identity* (Vol. 2). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Kilgo, C. A., Sheets, J. K., and Pascarella, E. T. (2015). The link between high-impact practices and student learning: Some longitudinal evidence. *Higher Education, 39,* 509-525. Doi: 10.1007/s10734-014-9788-z

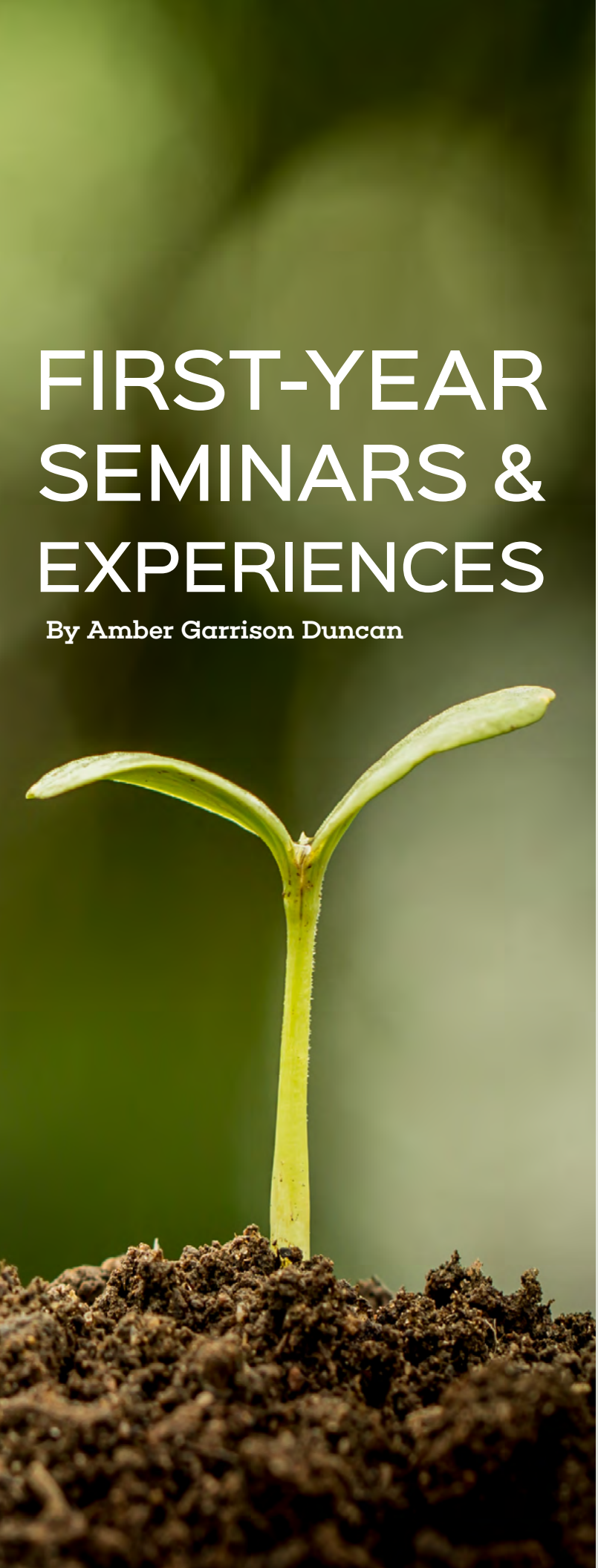
Kuh, G. D. (2008). *High-Impact Educational Practices: What They Are, Who Has Access to Them, and Why They Matter.* Washington, DC: AACU.

Kuh, G. D. and O'Donnell, K. (2013). *Ensuring quality and taking high-impact practices to scale.* Washington, DC: AACU.

Finley, A., & McNair, T. (2013). *Assessing underserved students' engagement in high-impact practices.* Washington, DC: AACU.

National Survey of Student Engagement. (2007). *NSSE Annual Report 2007: Experience that Matter: Enhancing Student Learning and Success.* Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research.

Pascarella, E. T., & Terenzini, P. T. (2005). *How college affects students: A third decade of research (Vol. 2).* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.



FIRST-YEAR SEMINARS & EXPERIENCES

By Amber Garrison Duncan

Understanding how students experience the transition to college as their relationships, daily activities, and responsibilities change (Schlossberg) can inform how High Impact Practices are structured in the first year. High Impact Practices (HIPs) have become an important aspect of the first year as a way to increase both learning and retention. This is reflected in the fact that many schools have easily identified programs and staff to facilitate curricular and co-curricular approaches to engaging students in the first year (Kuh, 2008). To support the professionals engaged in this work and build scholarship on effective practices, two major organizations have emerged: The National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Student in Transition (http://www.sc.edu/fye/), a clearinghouse for the volumes of scholarship and research on first-year experiences and best practices; and the National Orientation Directors Association that supports education, leadership, and professional development on the transition to college and retention (nodaweb.org).

> "The Alpha Gamma Delta Alpha Experience spans the entire first year of membership so members explore important areas of membership such as scholarship, values, and life balance."

The first year experience presents an opportunity to socialize students about the learning experiences they should seek. It can be critical to communicate an expectation for students to participate in HIPs over their entire college career by creating structural approaches. Some campuses do this by requiring participation in high impact programs so all students participate in the experiences that are known to create higher levels of engagement. This approach communicates that student engagement is important and ensures that students, especially first-generation college students, are not left out of these important programs simply because they were not aware. Examples include summer bridge programs, orientation, week of welcome, and first year seminars. Bundling these programs with other HIPs, especially service learning and learning communities, in the first year have a positive relationship for increasing the level of academic challenge, collaborative learning, faculty-student interaction, and

perception of a supportive campus environment (Kuh & O'Donnell, 2013). This may be because service learning and learning communities are forms of active learning, where critical inquiry and collaborative learning can occur in small groups (Braxton, Milem, & Sullivan, 2000). For specific examples on how to build connections between first-year seminars and learning communities, see Schmidt & Graziano (2016).

In Fraternity and Sorority Life, where some students are joining fraternal organizations in the first year of college, chapters and new members may struggle with balancing membership responsibilities and participation in campus first year experience programs. Understanding the academic and co-curricular requirements on the campus in the first year can ensure advisors and staff are able to help chapter leaders navigate conflicts and prioritize new member development by focusing on the HIPs required.

Additionally, many fraternity and sorority communities sponsor classes or orientation for all the new members on a campus. These experiences can also incorporate the elements described above by involving campus faculty, engaging new members in critical inquiry and writing, and collaborative learning activities. These can also be elements that are shared with chapter officers responsible for leading their own chapter's new member programming.

It is also important to acknowledge that some Inter/National organizations are structuring their membership development programs in a way that reflects a first year experience. These new member experiences are taking the elements of a high quality first year experience to support collaborative learning, encourage writing and reflection, and interact with faculty and staff. The Alpha Gamma Delta Alpha Experience spans the entire first year of membership so members explore important areas of membership such as scholarship, values, and life balance.

REFERENCES

Braxton, J. M., Milem, J. F., and Sullivan, A. S. "The Influence of Active Learning on the College Student Departure Process: Toward a Revision of Tinto's Theory." Journal of Higher Education, 2000, 71(5), 569–590.

Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito. (1998). Student Development in College: Theory, Research, and Practice. Jossey-Bass: San Francisco, CA.

Kuh, G.D. (2008). "High-impact educational practices: What they are, who has access to them, and why they matter." AAC&U, Washington, D.C.

Kuh, G.D. & O'Donnell, K. (2013). Ensuring Quality & Taking High-Impact Practices to Scale. AAC&U, Washington, D.C.

When looking at the elements of a quality first year, the experience should include:

- Small groups that interact with faculty or staff on a regular basis
- Critical inquiry
- Frequent writing
- Information literacy
- Collaborative learning
- Other skills that develop intellectual and practical competencies

(Kuh, 2008)

"Understanding the academic and co-curricular requirements on the campus in the first year can ensure advisors and staff are able to help chapter leaders navigate conflicts and prioritize new member development by focusing on the HIPs required."

Other programs and activities that incorporate components of this HIP:

- Alpha Chi Omega's member development program
- Florida State University's "Emerging Leaders" Course
- Sigma Phi Epsilon's "Sigma Year" of member development
- Sigma Kappa's "New Member" Experience

COMMON INTELLECTUAL EXPERIENCES

By Matt Deeg

"IF FRATERNITY AND SORORITY PROFESSIONALS FAIL TO TO HELP STUDENTS FIND AVENUES TO ACTUALLY USE THAT EDUCATION, IT MEANS SKIPPING OVER THE APPLYING KNOWLEDGE STEP OF THE LEARNING PROCESS AND DOING STUDENTS A DISSERVICE AS THEY MOVE OUT INTO THE WORLD."

If you visit almost any institution of higher learning, you'll find some form of core courses; general education requirements, core curriculum, however the institution refers to them, they are common experiences that seek to involve students in a shared learning experience and to bring them more fully into the educational community. The curricular requirements of an institution certainly show intentional planning towards this shared experience, but they are not the only way to provide common intellectual experiences. Co-curricular activities have the potential to provide an expanded set of opportunities to add to or enhance the common education that students are engaging in.

There are several definite benefits for intentionally focusing on the fraternal experience. First, sharing specific educational opportunities and outcomes leads to all members of a fraternity/sorority community to having the same knowledge base and adds to to their potential shared growth. Rather than just a few organizations or individuals knowing about a certain topic, the opportunity to educate the whole community provides a level of shared understanding and could result in deeper community connections. Second, intentional intellectual experiences allow for members to view their experience as more than just a social endeavor, but also one that provides relevant growth and development. When there is a "curriculum" (nothing as rigorous or rigid as the core academic curriculum), members can see how their involvement will benefit and develop them over a period of time. Third, further connections between in- and out-of-class learning can be made, helping members to not just take in knowledge, but also to have opportunities to discuss and apply it. It is often said that students come to college first for an education. If fraternity and sorority professionals fail to to help students find avenues to actually use that education, it means skipping over the applying knowledge step of the learning process and doing students a disservice as they move out into the world.

There are several arenas that professionals can focus efforts for these common experiences. The first, and probably easiest, is at the chapter level. Providing for shared experiences for both new members and members alike begins the shared exploration of topics. As chapter members go through a common experience such as new member education or member development education, they have the opportunity to grow together in their understanding of concepts and in the practice of learned skills in their daily interactions with one another and leadership of the organization. Sharing these similar learning experiences also opens the door for continued chapter conversation about them, even after any sort of "formal" programming has ended.

Moving outward, professionals can work to provide councils or specific community populations with avenues for shared exploration of topics. Specific opportunities could include a semester fraternity/sorority leadership experience, service immersion trips, and topical seminars that target key members of a population. Participants could be chosen because of position, length of tenure, or a specific demographic reason. Navigating and providing common educational experiences for this broader population (especially at campuses with larger FSL communities) can be more difficult and require greater intentionality on the part of the professional. It is hard to create a shared experience, but the commonality implies that students receive information on certain topic areas; this doesn't mean that they must all learn in the same way or receive the exact same information. Obviously to include all members of the community in these opportunities would be difficult or nearly impossible. But, imagine an entire fraternal community reading or focusing on the same theme for the year. One chapter may choose to do this by hands-on community activism; another might begin by educating its members through various campus partnerships around the same topic; still another might work on an immersive experience for its members to have lived experience with the concept. Professionals might work to identify the specific themes for the year and work with council and chapter leadership to provide for chapter- or community-specific intellectual experiences around that shared theme.

"MOVING OUTWARD, PROFESSIONALS CAN WORK TO PROVIDE COUNCILS OR SPECIFIC COMMUNITY POPULATIONS WITH AVENUES FOR SHARED EXPLORATION OF TOPICS. SPECIFIC OPPORTUNITIES COULD INCLUDE A SEMESTER FRATERNITY/SORORITY LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE, SERVICE IMMERSION TRIPS, AND TOPICAL SEMINARS THAT TARGET KEY MEMBERS OF A POPULATION. PARTICIPANTS COULD BE CHOSEN BECAUSE OF POSITION, LENGTH OF TENURE, OR A SPECIFIC DEMOGRAPHIC REASON."

Please note that this advocacy for common intellectual experiences does not mean that all students should have the same learning experience or outcomes. Rather it is a call to provide students with some shared experience so they can continue through their collegiate life with similar starting knowledge points. Additionally, it is a way to create unity around shared learning, much in the same way that orientation programs create unity for incoming first-time students. The common intellectual experiences will allow for greater connection: between individuals,organizations, and in- and out-of-class learning.

LEARNING COMMUNITIES

By Annie Carlson Welch

Learning communities have been commonplace at colleges and universities since the 1920s but have ebbed and flowed in popularity and presence since that time. Learning communities are defined broadly as opportunities where the integration of learning can occur across coursework and can engage students in "big questions" - those that address major societal, cultural, or historical issues. Learning communities typically include common academic coursework, group work with peers and their professors, and have a common theme that penetrates assignments, readings, and projects through a variety of disciplines (Kuh, 2008).

> "Because learning communities are so often associated with residence halls, it can be assumed that the strongest connection for social fraternities and sororities is the chapter house. However, learning communities do not need a residential space to exist as a high impact practice."

The original learning communities served as some of the first general education programs and had the goal of challenging academic practices in higher education. However, research institutions, which typically consist of independent academic colleges, saw little value in the existence of learning communities and, as a result, the programs were short-lived. A resurgence occurred in the 1960s when colleges and universities were booming with increasing enrollment and were seeking ways to create a sense of community. However, they quickly declined in popularity because their structures, built upon educational innovation, were not sustainable at universities that valued traditional learning models (Smith, 2001).

Over the past 15 years, learning communities have resurfaced with new purpose and more lasting presence. On residential campuses, learning communities are often housed in residence halls as Living Learning Communities (LLCs). While this is not a required core aspect of the experience, the residential part of learning communities can be highly effective in creating a strong sense of community, increased first year GPAs, higher rates of retention, and greater exposure to who are different from themselves (Kuh, 2008). For example, North Carolina State University's learning communities are called "villages." The Exploratory Studies Village at NC State is restricted to first year students who enter NC State without declaring a major. Residents of the village live within two residence halls, are required to take the same major and career exploration courses with one another during their first year, participate in common programming with faculty, and build meaningful relationships with peer mentors. Many villagers are also involved in linked academic courses that increase their opportunities to explore various disciplines with a focus on developing strong critical thinking skills. While students are focused on major exploration throughout their time in the village, the big question they are answering is "what will I do (major and career) to make a difference in our world?" Over the past 20 years, data has consistently shown that students living in the Exploratory Studies Village have higher GPAs and rates of retention than those living elsewhere. Additionally, surveys indicate that students feel a deeper sense of connection

with NC State and are overall more satisfied with their first year in college (Carlson Welch, 2016).

Professional fraternal organizations can be great examples of learning communities. Members of these organizations are often enrolled in similar coursework and are advised by faculty within the discipline. The organization's mission serves as the theme of the learning community and may also drive the "big questions" that are being explored. For example, Alpha Chi Sigma, a professional fraternity focused on chemistry, is composed of members who are majoring in chemistry or related fields and are often enrolled in similar patterns of coursework. As a result, they can interact with their members both in and out of class regarding the field of chemistry. Their big question? "To strive for the advancement of chemistry both as a science and as a profession" (Alpha Chi Sigma, 2016).

Because learning communities are so often associated with residence halls, it can be assumed that the strongest connection for social fraternities and sororities is the chapter house. However, learning communities do not need a residential space to exist as a high impact practice. Social fraternities and sororities have many other opportunities to be learning communities. Generally, they encompass a shared theme (organizational mission, values, and ritual), group work with peers (executive boards and committees), and exploration of a common topic (such as a philanthropic endeavor). However, these components alone do not make for a high impact practice. In order to be considered as such, the learning community needs to include more focused coursework or shared learning experiences, a stronger connection to "big questions," the incorporation and engagement of faculty in the fraternal experience (not just as advisors), and the exploration of common topics through a variety of disciplines.

As fraternity/sorority professionals know, individual chapters can vary greatly and distance themselves from the overall mission of the organization. Therefore, it would be important to analyze each chapter individually as to whether or not a learning community exists as a high impact practice.

References

Alpha Chi Sigma (2016). Prospective Members. Retrieved May 10, 2016, from http://www.alphachisigma.org/prospective-members.

Carlson Welch, A. (2016). Student experience survey from 2010-2016. Unpublished raw data.

Kuh, G. (2008). High-impact educational practices: What they are, who has access to them, and why they matter. AAC&U, Washington, D.C. 34 pp.

Smith, B. (2001). The challenge of learning communities as a growing national movement. Prepared for the Association of American Colleges and Universities Conference on Learning Communities, Providence, Rhode Island.

Elements of a High Impact Fraternal Learning Community

Integration of learning across courses

Fraternities and sororities could create educational experiences for their members that weave common topics and themes throughout.

Involve students in "big questions" that matter beyond the classroom

Fraternities and sororities are prime for this component because most were created for the empowerment of their membership in the face of societal restrictions. Chapters could analyze a complex topic and engage their members in solution-orientated exploration of that topic.

Linked coursework

Fraternities and sororities could encourage members to take coursework that applies to the "big questions" they are exploring. Many campuses have "emerging leaders" or "Greek 101" credit-bearing courses that could be connected to courses in sociology, history, or political science that analyze and connect leadership and society.

Group work with peers and their professors

Fraternities and sororities already engage in a considerable amount of group work. They could consider connecting this work with faculty who share similar interests. This needs to go beyond recruitment, social, and philanthropic planning to focus on addressing issues on campus or within the local community.

Common topic/common readings through the lens of different disciplines

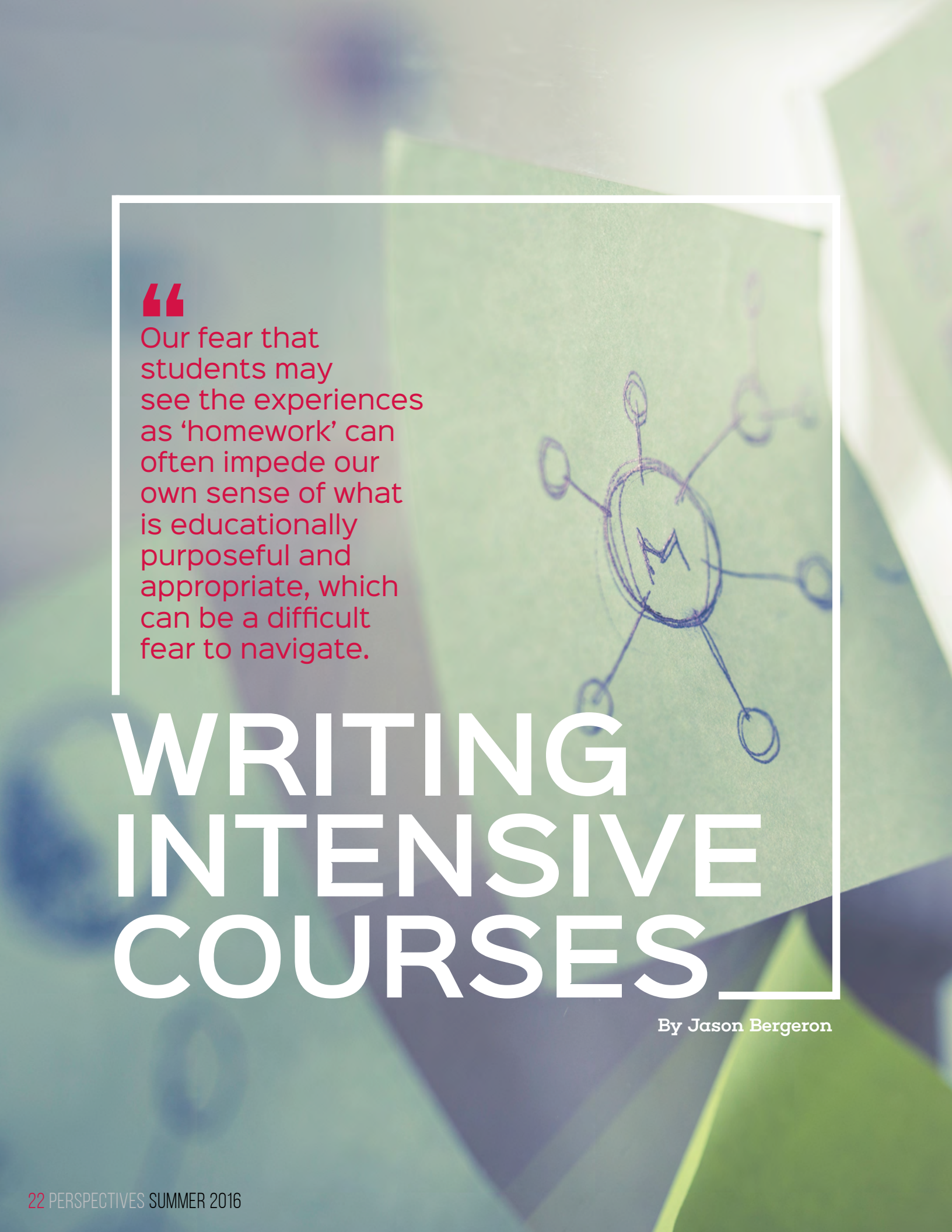
Considering that fraternities and sororities already have themes/topics that they exist within, this component could be achieved by engaging members in thoughtful analysis of those topics through various lenses.

Service learning

Fraternities and sororities could become prime centers for service learning if they increase their focus on serving their local communities and incorporate intentional reflection on the impact this service makes. Additionally, this service should relate to the organization's mission and/or the big questions they are analyzing.

Other programs & activities that incorporate components of this HIP

Sigma Phi Epsilon's "Residential Learning Communities"



> Our fear that students may see the experiences as 'homework' can often impede our own sense of what is educationally purposeful and appropriate, which can be a difficult fear to navigate.

WRITING INTENSIVE COURSES

By Jason Bergeron

In a 2015 study, 75% of employers say they want more college emphasis on key areas such as written communication (AAC&U, 2015). Within High Impact Practices, "Writing Intensive Courses" are those that "emphasize writing at all levels of instruction and across the curriculum, including final year projects" (AAC&U, 2008). These are courses or groups of courses in which the primary means of the development of original thought is through the written word. We may see these in classrooms as writing seminars surrounding a topic of social relevance or in the form of capstone experiences where students are asked to synthesize multiple levels of knowledge across courses and disciplines. For many of our disciplines, and especially within the social sciences, critical writing continues to be the delivery method for demonstrating original analysis.

While we are not often positioned to directly address writing intensive courses within the scope of fraternity/sorority work, writing can be a powerful tool in a student's ability to move towards mastery of outcomes such as critical and creative thinking, information literacy, and problem-solving. Our fear that students may see the experiences as 'homework' can often impede our own sense of what is educationally purposeful and appropriate, which can be a difficult fear to navigate.

However, as writing can be a mentally exhaustive process, it is important to engage students in writing in ways that directly addresses program and/or experiential outcomes, and in a way that promotes feedback and growth. The opportunity for on-going, continuous, and critical feedback is a tenet of a high-impact practice, so it is critical that, in addition to a specific purpose for asking students to write, there be an ingrained mechanism for feedback.

As one conceptualizes how the ideologies behind a writing intensive course fit into their daily work within fraternity/sorority, using the following questions may serve as a starting point to generate ideas:

- We often collect information about student behaviors or participation in programs through awards programs, accreditation programs, etc. How can we provide writing opportunities within award and accreditation programs that allow students to expand on their learning? Additionally, how can we develop clear rubrics that provide them feedback about their learning? For example, asking how many service hours they completed may achieve one aim, but asking how a culture of service and volunteerism is created and nurtured within the chapter achieves a different, more learning-centered aim.

- How can students use writing to think critically about their own experiences in fraternity/sorority life? We often ask chapter leaders about how they perceive their chapter to be performing. What if we asked a chapter leader to perform a brief cultural audit on their chapter and articulate in writing what they found?

- How can we take day-to-day work with undergraduates and use writing to better achieve learning goals? We can use officer applications as an example - asking an applicant to write 500 words through a specific prompt that is evaluated against a rubric may provide us better insight into their ability to understand diverse viewpoints, synthesize data, and lead others effectively.

- Many of us have created courses specifically for fraternity/sorority leaders. How can writing be the primary delivery mechanism through courses developed for fraternity/sorority leaders-where deep analysis can occur? How can these courses mirror an intensive writing course where writing is used to dig deep into a topic of social relevance?

Again, while many of us may not be in a position to apply this high-impact practice directly, the power of writing as a tool for student learning can serve multiple aims within fraternity/sorority advising.

References

Kuh, G. D. (2008). High-Impact Educational Practices: What They Are, Who Has Access to Them, and Why They Matter. Washington, DC: AACU.

Hart Research Associates. (2015). It Takes More Than a Major: Employer Priorities for College Learning and Student Success. Washington, DC: AACU.

Other programs & activities that incorporate components of this HIP:

- Pi Beta Phi's "Leading with Values" new member education program
- Alpha Sigma Alpha's "Advantage" member education initiative

COLLABORATIVE ASSIGNMENTS & PROJECTS

By Matt Deeg

"TO FULLY MAKE THE COLLABORATIVE ASSIGNMENT A HIGH IMPACT PRACTICE, HOWEVER, PROFESSIONALS MUST ALSO BE INTENTIONAL ABOUT THE ADJOURNING OF THE GROUP. THEY SHOULD WORK WITH STUDENTS TO PROCESS THE EXPERIENCE, TO TEASE OUT ANY LEARNING ABOUT SELF OR OTHERS THAT MIGHT HAVE OCCURRED, AND TO HELP STUDENTS IDENTIFY AREAS WHERE THEY EXCELLED AT WORKING COLLABORATIVELY AND THOSE AREAS WHERE GROWTH IS STILL NEEDED."

It is a very rare individual who gets to work in a vacuum throughout their entire life. No, most of our work, both in college and beyond, happens in group settings and through partnerships and collaborations. This issue and all issues of Perspectives are perfect examples of collaborative efforts wherein professionals bounce ideas off one another and critique each other's inputs. The high impact practice of collaborative assignments and projects has the potential to prepare students for their future roles within a connected society. While collaborative assignments are becoming increasingly common in the classroom, there is also plenty of opportunity for this learning to take place in the fraternity/sorority life setting when approached with intentionality.

> "AT A DEEPER COGNITIVE LEVEL, THEY MUST UNDERSTAND THEIR PERSONAL BIASES AND MENTAL MODELS; IF STUDENTS ARE UNAWARE OF THE LENSES THEY BRING INTO A DISCUSSION OR GROUP COLLABORATION, THEY MAY STRUGGLE TO GRASP WHY ANOTHER'S EXPERIENCE OR VIEWS ARE SO DIFFERENT FROM THEIR OWN."

Within a collaborative project, there is a need for students to learn to listen to and appreciate the insights and backgrounds of others. The collaborative project goes the opposite direction of the "lone wolf" assignment; group members learn that being a leader and a positive citizen involves sharing the opportunities and responsibilities with others. Students will recognize that they won't have all the answers, and that, fortunately, they do not have to, because their fellow group members can supplement and enhance their knowledge, skills, and abilities. They come to understand that in a project or in a work group there are many moving pieces. By identifying how each individual contributes to the group success in both the execution of the task and the problem solving that may arise during the process. Beyond the understanding of the group processes and roles, there may also be personal reflection spurred by contact with an opinion or experience that differs from a student's current mental model. All of these potential learning opportunities demonstrate the continued need for student collaborative projects.

Although collaboration takes place every day in fairly organic ways, there are ways for the fraternity/sorority experience to intentionally infuse it into students' lives or to increase the learning power of the organic experience. Some of these include participation on chapter and council executive boards or community committees, planned membership experiences, or study groups. These are opportunities that have been created explicitly to push group members to work together, to overcome obstacles, and to make group decisions. Perhaps one of the best examples of this would be a council or chapter project involving multiple moving pieces. Any type of programming (whether internal or external) will require the expertise of a variety of individuals – the president to ensure the task meets the organizational mission; the treasurer to keep the financial aspects on track; the programming chair to handle room reservations, guest speakers, and/or refreshments; the public relations chair to get the word out; and the secretary or executive vice president to keep everyone on task. Of course, this is a common occurrence in the fraternity/sorority world, and this organic occurrence opens the door for all sorts of learning.

While we may easily recognize those areas for collaborative learning to take place, to fully capitalize on the learning in collaborative assignments, we must first prepare students to participate in them. They must learn to ask questions of each other and to truly listen. They must learn to involve all members of a group, not just the strong or majority voices. They must be equipped to recognize the strengths they and others hold and how they complement one another. At a deeper cognitive level, they must understand their personal biases and mental models; if students are unaware of the lenses they bring into a discussion or group collaboration, they may struggle to grasp why another's experience or views are so different from their own.

Professionals can help students prepare in all of these ways by equipping them with inter- and intra-personal skills. Professionals can share the questioning skills they themselves have gained through coursework and career life. They can, in both individual and group settings, help students recognize their individual contexts and frameworks and how these can influence their interactions with others. They can, throughout the collaborative process, offer continual feedback to group members/leaders on how they are involving others and incorporating a wide range of perspective into the group process. Finally, they can assist students in closing the loop on collaborative experience. Groups do develop in predictable ways (see Tuckman's Stages of Group Development), and much attention can be paid to the forming and performing aspects of the group. To fully make the collaborative assignment a high impact practice, however, professionals must also be intentional about the adjourning of the group. They should work with students to process the experience, to tease out any learning about self or others that might have occurred, and to help students identify areas where they excelled at working collaboratively and those areas where growth is still needed. With careful attention to all phases of the collaborative experience, it moves from a mere exercise in teamwork to a learning experience that will aid students in future collaborative work both in school and beyond.

UNDERGRAD RESEARCH

By Noah Borton

Expanding learning opportunities to include scholarly endeavors is no longer something reserved for masters and doctoral students. Faculty are engaging students in research opportunities as a way to expand upon learning within the classroom. According to the Association of American Colleges & Universities, "The goal is to involve students with actively contested questions, empirical observation, cutting-edge technologies, and the sense of excitement that comes from working to answer important questions." (Kuh, 2008, Para. 8).

"The goal is to involve students with actively contested questions, empirical observation, cutting-edge technologies, and the sense of excitement that comes from working to answer important questions." (Kuh, 2008, Para. 8).

STEM fields offer a significant number of undergraduate research opportunities through course projects and faculty driven research initiatives. However, there can be undergraduate research projects available within the arts and social sciences as well. Expanding this concept into student affairs and more specifically fraternity and sorority life can be more challenging. With some creativity and intentionality there can be some methods for supporting and creating this high impact practice through the fraternity and sorority experience.

While research may not be a core function of fraternity and sorority life offices, there are still opportunities to support undergraduate learning through research activities. Effective practice in this area can serve as an excellent tool for bridging the gap between the curricular and co-curricular experience. Not only can students utilize academic learning to apply research in fraternity and sorority efforts, the fraternity and sorority experience could be channeled to enhance curricular undergraduate research efforts. It is important to remember that facilitating high impact experiences through fraternity and sorority life does not have to mean a recreation or duplication of activities taking place elsewhere within the institution. In this case, it may be just as effective to look for opportunities to enhance and support existing practices and work within the office.

References

Kuh, G. D., (2008). High-Impact Practices: What They Are, Who Has Access to Them and Why They Matter. American Association of Colleges and Universities. Accessed via https://www.aacu.org/leap/hips

UATE

The following are some possible strategies for incorporating the high impact practice of undergraduate research into the work of fraternity and sorority life:

- Utilize the fraternity/sorority mission and values as a framework for processing a research experience. One tactic can be to supplement the research experience rather than create it. On most campuses it is likely that faculty, not student affairs staff, are best positioned to sponsor and guide research activities. So, fraternity and sorority staff must look for an angle to provide a unique enhancement to the work. This could involve incorporating undergraduate research as a supported or encouraged activity within individual standards or recognition programs. Also, staff could create reflection/discussion guides which encourage the student to utilize their fraternity or sorority mission/values as a lens for further processing of their research experience. For example, students could be prompted to think about how their fraternity/sorority experience informs their research ethics, or their motivations for scholarly work. Additionally, fraternities and sororities could create forums for students to share their undergraduate research with others. Whether this occurs on a chapter level, or a community level, the opportunity to share scholarly work and engage in discussion with peers about their work could create powerful learning experiences.

- Many offices and inter/national organizations are engaging in their own research and assessment efforts. Students can be included as research assistants or interns who help with an existing research or assessment effort by a fraternity and sorority life office or inter/national organization. In addition, student leaders can be engaged in processing and synthesizing data. There is great opportunity for learning by introducing students to data about their fraternity and sorority experience and asking them to analyze the data and postulate conclusions and implications.

- Teach students to gather and interpret data. Students have a plethora of data available to them and there is great opportunity for staff and advisors to provide them with access to more. Data could include quantitative measures such as grade reports, membership records, survey results, pre and post tests for educational programs, quantitative standards, or accountability programs. Qualitative data could include personal observations, content analysis of organizational materials, focus groups, and interviews. Giving students tools to understand their environment and a venue for reflecting on and discussing the data they are able to gather can give students the opportunity to be research practitioners.

DIVERSITY AND GLOBAL EXPERIENCES

By Joshua W. Schutts, Ph.D.

The Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U, 2007) and George Kuh (2008) frame "diversity and global experiences" as learning experiences where students experience the perspectives and cultures of people who differ from them. Often, this exposure and experience involves coming-to-terms with one's own identities, cultures, and privileges. Often, these type of high-impact experiences are augmented by community-based learning (e.g., service learning or internships) or study abroad. These experiences have the power to be among the most transformative for a student—provided the experience contains the elements of high-impact practice.

Study abroad is an excellent example of a "diversity and global experiences" high-impact practice. When done right, a few weeks, a semester, or even a year outside of the country can have a profound impact. When I was a graduate student at The University of Southern Mississippi, I studied abroad in Ocho Rios, Jamaica as part of my student affairs master's program. The transformative growth that I experienced relative to my world view cannot be understated. During those five weeks, my classmates and I were confronted with our privilege and many of the things we as Americans take for granted every day. Reflecting back, I believe that experience fundamentally transformed how I see the world, and more importantly, how I see my place in this world. I had that experience because the faculty and staff intentionally developed curricula that facilitated deeper learning. Through daily reflection either formally in a journal or informally in small group discussions, I was challenged to make meaning of the learning I was engaged upon.

What the Data Say

O'Neill (2012) reported on two outcomes that are particularly relevant to this type of high-impact practice: contributing to the larger community, and social perspective taking (i.e., taking seriously the perspectives of others). Below are some highlights of the findings.

Measures	Description of Measures	Findings
Personal and Social Responsibility	• Coming to college with an awareness of the importance of contributing to the greater good through community involvement • The extent to which their campus has helped them (a) expand their own awareness, (b) learn the skills necessary to effect change, and (c) deepen their own commitment to change	• 46.1% strongly agreed they came to college aware • 32.9% strongly agreed campus helped expand awareness • 31.5% strongly agreed they learned the skills necessary • 36.4% strongly agreed their commitment was deepened
Ability to Learn from Diverse Perspectives	• Developed an increased ability to learn from diverse perspectives during their time in college	• 52.6% strongly agreed

"IF THEY ARE TO SUCCEED IN LIFE, STUDENTS ALSO NEED TO LEARN HOW TO ENGAGE SKILLFULLY THE HUMAN COMPLEXITIES OF REAL SITUATIONS, THE VARIED PERSPECTIVES, PREFERENCES, AND CLAIMS THAT DIFFERENT PEOPLE BRING" (COLBY & SULLIVAN, 2009, P. 27)."

Measures	Findings	Findings
Socially Responsible Leadership	Level of commitment to eight component areas of socially responsible leadership	Moderate increase in student's average score (from 4.01 to 4.16 on a 5-point scale)
Political and Social Involvement	The degree of importance students place on activities such as volunteering, promoting racial understanding, and influencing political structures	Essentially no change in student's average score (from 2.69 to 2.63 on a 4-point scale)
Universality-Diversity	An interest in participating in diverse social and cultural activities, the impact of diversity on self-understanding and personal growth, and the degree of comfort with diverse individuals	Little to no change in student's average score (from 4.64 to 4.72 on a 6-point scale)
Openness to Diversity and Challenge	The level of agreement with statements related to openness to cultural and racial diversity and enjoyment in being challenged by different perspectives, values, and ideas.	The level of agreement with statements related to openness to cultural and racial diversity and enjoyment in being challenged by different perspectives, values, and ideas.

These data paint an interesting picture. We must begin to explore why some students experience gains, others remain relatively unchanged, and still others decline. In her report, O'Neill (2012) offers several best and promising practices that tend to usher in positive growth. We would be well-served to adopt these practices into our programming. The extent to which students may experience multiple practices likely magnifies their personal growth:

- Having intellectual discussions with students of other races/ethnicities
- Having meaningful and honest discussions about race/ethnic relations with students of other races/ethnicities
- Participation in Diversity Courses
- Participation in Diversity Experiences such as study abroad
- Reflective learning

References

Association of American Colleges and Universities. (2007). College Learning for the New Global Century. Washington, DC: AAC&U.

Colby, A., & Sullivan, W. M. (2009). Strengthening the foundations of students' excellence, integrity, and social contribution. Liberal Education, 95(1), 22-29.

Dey, E. L. and associates (2010). Should Colleges Focus More on Personal and Social Responsibility?" Washington, DC: AAC&U. Retrieved from: www.aacu.org/core_commitments/documents/PSRII_Findings_April2008.pdf.

Kuh, G. D. (2008). High-Impact Educational Practices: What They Are, Who Has Access to Them, and Why They Matter. Washington, DC: AACU.

O'Neill, N. (2012). Promising practices for personal and social responsibility. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.

Pascarella, E. T., and colleagues. (2007). Methodological report for the Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education. University of Iowa: Center for Research on Undergraduate Education. Retrieved from:

http://www.liberalarts.wabash.edu/storage/WNSLAE_Research_Methods_March_2008.pdf.

Other programs & activities that incorporate components of this HIP:

- Delta Upsilon's "Global Service
- Initiative"
- Alpha Chi Omega's "Global Service Initiative"
- Circle of Sisterhood's "Trek"
- Sigma Phi Epsilon's "The Pilgrimage"

"The idea is to give students direct experience with issues they are studying in the curriculum and with ongoing efforts to analyze and solve problems in the community. A key element in these programs is the opportunity students have to both apply what they are learning in real-world settings and reflect in a classroom setting on their service experiences"

SERVICE LEARNING

By Noah Borton

Community service work is not a new concept for fraternities and sororities. However, to meet the criteria of a high impact practice, the service work must extend beyond volunteerism and engage the students in service learning. According to the Association of American Colleges & Universities, "The idea is to give students direct experience with issues they are studying in the curriculum and with ongoing efforts to analyze and solve problems in the community. A key element in these programs is the opportunity students have to both apply what they are learning in real-world settings and reflect in a classroom setting on their service experiences" (Kuh, 2008).

Creating a service learning experience requires a greater personal and organizational commitment beyond the simple act of volunteering. Additionally, it requires a more complex understanding of service. "Helping, fixing and serving represent three different ways of seeing life. When you help, you see life as weak. When you fix, you see life as broken. When you serve, you see life as whole. Fixing and helping may be the work of the ego, and service the work of the soul," (Remen, 1999). It is within this depth of service that we seek to drive meaningful engagement.

Service learning in higher education is typically defined as service activities conducted in concert with credit-bearing academic courses (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996). However, it is the nature of the activities, not the administration of academic credit which facilitates the high impact practice. Therefore, opportunity to extend this strategy into non-credit-bearing activities exists. The fraternity and sorority experience can be a framework for helping students to understand this level of engagement is necessary for powerful service and high impact practice.

Methods for creating legitimate service learning opportunities within fraternity and sorority life can range from simple to quite complex. However, all must include the key components of learning new information, applying new information in a community context, and reflecting upon the experience. Typically in academic service learning this is accomplished through learning in a classroom setting and application in a community based setting. However, the same principles can apply to learning in the co-curricular environment if the proper methods are put into place. Certainly the more intensive efforts have the greatest likelihood of facilitating a powerful learning experience, however, all of these tactics can have value toward creating high impact practice.

EDUCATION AND REFLECTION

One of the simplest ways to create a more effective service learning experience is to incorporate education and reflection into service activities. The educational component could be related to learning new information about a cause, community, organization, or the impact of a service endeavor. The educational component

could also be related to skills or competencies which can be directly applied or experienced within a service setting. The reflection component can occur before, during, and after the service experience. "Reflection activities can serve as a springboard for sharing different perspectives, understanding nuances, appreciating alternative points of view, employing self-monitored learning practices, pursuing new information, and clarifying values and attitudes" (Henry, n.d., p. 3).

RELATIONSHIPS

Meaningful service learning experiences can be more easily created when an organization develops an ongoing relationship with a non-profit organization or community group. This allows the fraternity or sorority to better understand the needs of their community partner, and it allows the community partner to better utilize the capabilities of the fraternity and sorority members. It is ideal if students take a central role in the development of this relationship as it will generate buy in through a connection to the individuals and organization they are working with.

COMMUNITY INTERACTION

While an experience building a house can be a great service experience, the learning pales in comparison to the learning that can occur when the building experience is coupled with the opportunity to interact with the family who will receive that home. Interpersonal engagement and relationships can provide context, depth, and humanity for issues students have learned about. There are many ways to facilitate this type of interaction:

- Service activities can include some front line activities where students directly interact with service recipients.
- Activities can be selected where students can serve alongside community members, perhaps in partnership with community groups.
- Panel discussions or individual interactions can be included as a part of the learning associated with a service experience.

SERVICE-INTEGRATED LEADERSHIP PROGRAMMING

For some fraternity and sorority organizations, it is common to include a service component as a part of a leadership program or convention. The mere addition of this service activity will typically fall short of a service learning experience which would be a high impact practice. To attain this level of impact, there must be an integration of the content of the program and the application through the service activity. This could closely follow the model of incorporating service learning into an academic course. The same principles would apply in a non-credit bearing instructional setting. There are a number of models in existence for integrating service learning into a curricular experience. Regardless of the model utilized, there are some themes that exist among them. "These themes include interconnecting course content and field experiences, reflective analysis of service experiences, providing opportunities for service-learning students to do meaningful work in service sites, and service experiences that recur over an extended time period," (Durbin & Marchel, 2011, p. 168). In these experiences it is important that service is not conducted for the sake of doing service within the program, the service experience must have a direct connection to the material learned in the program, and it must provide an opportunity for the application of learned material in a non-classroom environment.

SERVICE IMMERSION

It is becoming increasingly common in fraternity and sorority life to host immersive experiences where students will partake in a trip to another community for a multi-day service experience. They will typically live, serve, and socialize within the local culture. As with the example of a community service opportunity at a leadership program, the act of serving in another community for several days does not necessarily constitute a high impact practice. The immersion experience must include the core components of learning, application, and reflection. The development of these experiences can follow similar principles described above for incorporating service learning into curricular experience. The nature and intensity of an immersion experience can provide an excellent venue for creating a high impact practice within a short period of time. When planning these experiences it is important to consider how students will be educated on the issues and cultures of the communities they are working in, where are the opportunities for engagement with individuals in the community, how will reflection be incorporated into activities, and what issues and skills will be emphasized?

While undergraduate chapters are quite capable of organizing robust community service and philanthropy programs, it is unlikely their efforts will consistently meet the mark of a high impact practice. To generate service learning opportunities it is likely that the ongoing involvement of advisors and staff will be required.

RESOURCES

Durbin, D. J., & Marchel, C. A. (2011). Powerful Teaching: A Framework for Utilizing Service Learning in the Classroom. Education in Democracy: A Journal of the NNER. Summer (3) P. 167-183. Accessed via http://www.nnerpartnerships.org/wp-content/files/Article-11-Powerful-Teaching-A-Framework-for-Utilizing-Service-Learning-in-the-Classroom.pdf

Henry, M. (n.d.) Reflection Matters: Connecting Theory to Practice in Service Learning Courses. Montclair State University. Accessed via http://www.kon.org/hswp/archive/henry.pdf

Kuh, G. D., (2008). High-Impact Practices: What They Are, Who Has Access to Them and Why They Matter. American Association of Colleges and Universities. Accessed via https://www.aacu.org/leap/hips

Remen, R. N., (1999), Helping, Fixing, or Serving. Shambhala Sun. September.

Bringle, R. G, & Hatcher, J. A., (1996). Implementing service learning in higher education. The Journal of Higher Education. 67(2). P. 221-239. Accessed via http://www.jstor.org/stable/2943981

Internships

By Matt Deeg

A key component of a high impact practice is the use of experiential learning to spur education and development in students. Internships are becoming more and more common as a way to provide students with out-of-class experience relevant to both to their academic and professional growth. Internships can be used as exploratory or growth opportunities: students enter them to "try on" a potential career path or to gain hands-on experience in their chosen future field. Regardless of the reason, internships allow students to "do the work" and be guided in their development by others who have gone before them.

> "Prior to the start of the internship, the supervisor should work with the student to create a growth plan; they should recognize and agree upon what the student is hoping to learn from the experience as well as how the student will benefit the office or program."

Fraternity/sorority life has the opportunity to embrace this high impact practice. There is the traditional way: providing student internships in the office or with a leadership or service program. In this setting, a student benefits from the supervision of a staff member who has knowledge and experience that they share with the intern as he or she builds or supports a program. It is key in these traditional internships to provide for opportunities for growth and reflection. Prior to the start of the internship, the supervisor should work with the student to create a growth plan; they should recognize and agree upon what the student is hoping to learn from the experience as well as how the student will benefit the office or program. The supervisor should start the student off on the right track by providing appropriate onboarding – information about getting things done as well as certain knowledge, skills,

"In thinking about the role a leader plays, they have direct experience in the work, they receive coaching and advice from professionals who typically have 'been there' before, and they are encouraged to connect their in-class learning to their leadership practice."

and abilities needed to be effective in the role. Throughout the experience, the supervisor should check in and coach/mentor the student as he or she progresses in the role. Closing out the learning loop, the supervisor should provide an opportunity for the student to reflect on his or her learning and how it can translate and be applied to future life and work opportunities.

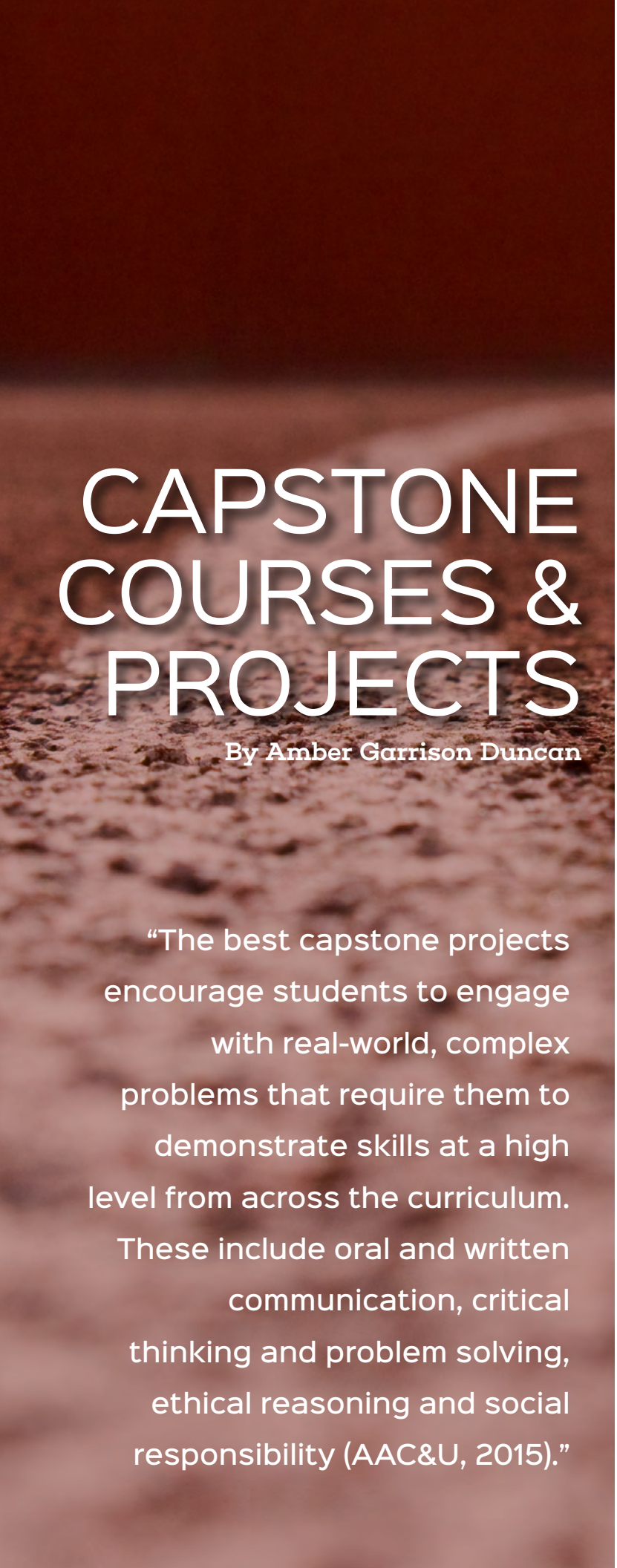
Outside of the traditional workplace opportunities, fraternity/sorority life leadership in itself could be considered an internship. In thinking about the role a leader plays, they have direct experience in the work, they receive coaching and advice from professionals who typically have "been there" before, and they are encouraged to connect their in-class learning to their leadership practice. This may be a new view of the leadership role, but one that professionals should adopt. Many student leaders already view their roles as jobs, so by the professional embracing that view and advising the student leader as they would an intern in the office, they create a greater space for growth and development. Additionally, viewing the leadership role as an internship opportunity allows the professional to connect the work the student leader is doing with the future work or role the student leader hopes to have. As mentioned, closing the loop is essential; the student leader should have the opportunity to self-evaluate as they might in a more traditional internship setting and create both meaning and narratives for future work endeavors.

Formal internship opportunities in fraternity/sorority life are rarer than many of the other high impact practices. When possible, providing students with the opportunity to create roles that feed their interests and development allows for this practice to be managed. But, even when the formal opportunity does not present itself, professionals can help students to grow as they might from a formal internship by approaching the advising of a leadership position much like a supervisor or mentor would approach advising an intern.

Other programs & activities that incorporate components of this HIP:

University of Iowa's Iowa GROW program

Beta Theta Pi's undergraduate leadership development internship program



CAPSTONE COURSES & PROJECTS

By Amber Garrison Duncan

"The best capstone projects encourage students to engage with real-world, complex problems that require them to demonstrate skills at a high level from across the curriculum. These include oral and written communication, critical thinking and problem solving, ethical reasoning and social responsibility (AAC&U, 2015)."

Capstone courses are designed for students to demonstrate an ability to integrate what they have learned through a focused, integrative project or course. Since these are typically designed in the last year of academic work, faculty serve as a guide and encourage students to work more independently (Paris & Ferren, 2013). Capstones are often seen as a way for students to engage in work most similar to the experiences they will face upon graduation. The best capstone projects encourage students to engage with real-world, complex problems that require them to demonstrate skills at a high level from across the curriculum. These include oral and written communication, critical thinking and problem solving, ethical reasoning and social responsibility (AAC&U, 2015). For capstones to be successful, learning must be scaffolded across the curriculum starting in the first year to ensure students have a sequence of learning experiences that prepare them for high level work (Paris & Ferren, 2013).

Some new approaches for high level capstone courses ask students to engage in complex, multidisciplinary, unscripted problems using other HIPS. Some include service learning, global experiences, and learning communities (Paris & Ferren, 2013). For instance, WPI has The Interactive Qualifying Project (IQP), where students identify a problem at the intersection of science/technology and social issues (see https://www.wpi.edu/academics/hua/student-projects.html). Portland State University and La Verne University work with community organizations so students have the opportunity to apply their knowledge and skills towards a local community issue.

"Since so many students do not currently have access to capstone projects or courses, this may be an opportunity where fraternity and sorority life can add value to the college learning experience."

While capstone course and projects are identified as a High Impact Practice, there is evidence that the opportunity to participate in a capstone course is currently limited to the type of institution a student attends. This practice has yet to reach scale, with only 37% of public institutions report offering a capstone, compared to 63% of private institutions (National Resource Center for First Year Experience and Students in Transition, 2011).

Fraternity and sorority professionals can encourage student participation in capstone courses and advocate for them to be

included in the curriculum. Since so many students do not currently have access to capstone projects or courses, this may be an opportunity where fraternity and sorority life can add value to the college learning experience. Learning experiences can be formed outside of the curriculum that capitalize on leadership experiences or members working in teams to solve community issues. For instance, philanthropy and service chairs may engage a committee of members to work with a community organization on a social problem. This may result in a new program or project where members are using their skills in service to the organization.

Another idea would be to ask groups of students to engage in Participatory Action Research, which is based on reflection, data collection, and action to improve the health and wellness of a group of people or community (Baum, MacDougall, & Smith, 2006). Each group would work together to identify a social problem, or turn inside the fraternity/sorority community to identify a problem. Each group would be assigned a faculty guide to help them define research questions, collect data, and design a plan of action.

REFERENCES

American Association of Colleges and Universities. (2015). The LEAP Challenge: Education for a world of unscripted problems. AAC&U: Washington, D.C.

Baum, F., MacDougall, C., & Smith, D., (2006). Participatory action research. Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health, 60(10), 854-857.

Paris, D. & Ferren, A. (2013). How students, faculty, and institutions can fulfill the promise of capstones. Peer Review, 14(4).

National Resource Center First Year Experience and Students in Transition. (2011). 2011 National Survey of Senior Capstone Experiences. Retrieved from: http://www.sc.edu/fye/research/surveys/survey_instruments/pdf/Executive_Summaries_2011_National_Survey_SeniorCapstoneExperiences(1).pdf

University of Washington. (n.d.). Capstone courses. Retrieved from: http://www.washington.edu/assessment/academic-assess/assessment-at-uw/departmental/capstones/

Other programs & activities that incorporate components of this HIP:

- Alpha Sigma Alpha's "Advantage: Senior Module" member education initiative
- Sigma Phi Epsilon's "Epsilon Year" in member development
- Alpha Gamma Delta's "Delta Year" in member development

The University of Washington (n.d.) provides faculty with a typology of capstone courses and shows the variety of ways these experiences can be facilitated:

- **Course Model.** Students are enrolled in a class on a particular issue in the field where they all work on the same problem, producing papers or projects.
- **Experiential Model.** Students participate in an experiential learning opportunity such as an internship. There may or may not be a work produced from the experience that is reviewed by a faculty member, but the student is assessed for their performance.
- **Independent Study Model.** Students define a topic for research and work with a faculty member intermittently for feedback. The project often ends with a paper and oral presentation.
- **Portfolio Collection Model.** Students gather work that demonstrates what the student knows and can do. These work products are placed in a portfolio and often will include a final written reflection.
- **Task Force Model.** Students are enrolled in a course with 15-20 other students focused on a particular issue. Each individual student decides on an argument about that issue and writes a piece that is then placed in a book submitted to the faculty member. Sometimes outside experts are brought in to critique the arguments.

ASSOCIATION OF
FRATERNITY | SORORITY ADVISORS
P.O. Box 1369
Fort Collins, CO 80522-1369
www.afa1976.org

FIRST 90 DAYS

is designed for those entering their first, full-time professional role within fraternity/sorority advising and are eager to improve themselves so they may better serve those they lead.

The program's live sessions will be bi-weekly on

Mondays from 4:00PM-5:00PM EST

Sessions will be facilitated by **Dominic Greene**, Director of Student Activities for American University, and **Melissa Kish**, Associate Director of Leadership Development and Fraternity & Sorority Life at Indiana University.

for more information visit:

www.afa1976.org

Registration deadline: September 1, 2016

This program is made possible through a generous gift from Sigma Chi Fraternity to the AFA Foundation.